Report of the Southeastern Iowa Synod Commissions

The bylaws of the Southeastern Iowa Synod state that “There shall be commissions responsible to the Synod Council to further the mission of this synod.” In 2009, the Synod Assembly adopted continuing resolutions that named five commissions that would bring focus to the priorities of the synod at that time: Global Relations, Evangelical Mission, Vocation and Faith Formation, Rostered Leadership Support and Church and Society. These commissions were created to be flexible and evolve as the vision for the synod evolved.

Over the past ten years, a number of working groups and networks have been developed and continue to carry out the hope and intent of these commissions, while other priorities have shifted.

The Synod Council amended the continuing resolutions regarding the commissions in December 2018 to support the priorities of this synod and those of our churchwide partners. The synod now has two main areas of focus: The Commission for Congregation Vitality and the Commission for Leadership.

Commission for Congregation Vitality

The Commission for Congregation Vitality seeks to empower congregations: their members, pastors and deacons, to become vital communities of faith:
- where the grace of God in Christ Jesus is regularly experienced and proclaimed
- where change is embraced
- who are connected to the wider church
- who positively impact the wider community in which they are located

Commission for Leadership

The Commission for Leadership seeks to support and empower leaders of this church to serve and live as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ. In this sense “leaders” includes both rostered and lay.

The work of the commissions

Leadership and Congregation Vitality are intricately connected and the work of these two commissions sometimes overlaps. Within the two commissions there are four essential groups within the synod who carry out and fulfill the vision:
- Rostered Leaders
- Congregational Cohorts for Learning
- Networks
- Deans

Rostered Leaders have the capacity to help listen and guide mission and vision within congregations, utilizing lay leaders and other resources available. They are charged with proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ week in and week out, and can be a source and model for change, connection, and impact.

Congregational Cohorts for Learning form relationships and partnerships for the sake of mission at the local context. Currently lived out in an 18-month process called Turning Point and formerly in an 18-month process called LEAD, these cohorts engage in an action-reflection-action model of learning and behavior changes which lead to adaptive change in a world where church continues to transform.

Networks will continue to be a vital part of the ministry. There are already several networks in existence, with moves to establish others including the Peace Not Walls; Children, Youth, and Family Ministry; Racial Justice; and Leadership.

Deans is the newest group involved in congregation vitality and leadership, having been formed after the 2018 synod assembly. This group works closely with the bishop to think about and craft strategies related to vitality and leadership.
Organizational Reports
Ten Things You Might Not Know about 1517 Media
Spring 2019

1. This year we’ll release several new Come to the Water resources to support Daniel Erlander’s two baptism manuals: Let the Children Come and Water Washed and Spirit Born. Check out the other sacramental resources already published to support Erlander’s A Place for You. augsburgfortress.org/cometothewater

2. Over a dozen distinguished African-descent scholars offer thoughtful viewpoints in Luther’s Small Catechism with African Descent Reflections. While affirming the gift of Luther’s work, these theologians provide a framework for broadening these explanations to address the experiences of Lutherans of African descent. augsburgfortress.org/african-descent

3. Recent additions to the Worship Matters series include handbooks on Preaching, Funerals, and Marriage. These volumes join several existing books that help leaders and laity develop a richer understanding of worship. augsburgfortress.org/worshipmatters

4. Fortress Press, Luther Seminary, and Word & World’s board have partnered to launch a new series of books for leaders in the church. Recent releases in this series include Liberating Youth from Adolescence by Jeremy Paul Myers and Elders Rising: The Promise and Peril of Aging by Roland D. Martinson. augsburgfortress.org/word-and-world

5. Good Grief, the bestselling book that has helped millions of readers find comfort and rediscover hope after loss has now expanded into a family of resources to help process, understand, and grow through moments of grief. augsburgfortress.org/good-grief

6. Part manifesto, part confession, and all love letter, Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the US by Rev. Lenny Duncan offers a bold new vision for the future of the ELCA and the broader mainline Christian community of faith. Duncan rejects the narrative of church decline and calls leaders and laity alike to renew the church through racial equality and justice. augsburgfortress.org/dear-church

7. Equip high school students to discover what they believe and why they believe it with T.B.D. Think. Believe. Do. Four-week sessions for small groups on themes of prayer, sin, mission, and salvation are now available. augsburgfortress.org/tbd

8. This video-based series is designed to help leaders create engaging experiences around challenging topics for small groups. Current titles are Dialogues On The Refugee Crisis and Dialogues On Sexuality, with more releases to come. augsburgfortress.org/dialogues-on

9. Inspired by the success of Grit and Grace, Beaming Books just released a picture book for kids titled Gritty and Graceful: 15 Inspiring Women of the Bible. This engaging book will inspire the gritty and graceful girls in your congregation to imagine their place in God’s story and how they can make a difference in the world. augsburgfortress.org/grittyandgraceful

10. There’s No Wrong Way to Pray is a picture book written by ELCA pastor Rebecca Ninke and her 10-year-old daughter Kate. It offers a kid-friendly reflection on talking to God in the everyday moments of life. This book will inspire kids of all ages and faith experiences as it reassures them that there’s no wrong way to talk to God. augsburgfortress.org/no-wrong-way

Want to learn more? Follow us on social media. Sign up for our free eNewsletters at augsburgfortress.org | wearesparkhouse.org | fortresspress.com | beamingbooks.com
2019 Report to ELCA Synod Assemblies

Central to the mission of Augustana College is education of the whole person: mind, body and spirit. This triune focus will be familiar to ELCA colleges and universities, whose educational missions are not concerned solely with accumulation of knowledge. Rather, one might say that for ELCA colleges, and liberal arts institutions in general, knowledge is the interplay of all aspects of human growth—intellectual, physical and spiritual. I would add one more to these, perhaps most related to the spiritual, and that is mindful.

Mindfulness, the state of being present now and paying attention to the moment at hand, is integral to individual well-being. It also is important to those concerned with the well-being of communities and the greater good in a world of precipitous change. Certainly important to education of the whole person, mindfulness also is relevant to another part of Augustana’s mission: educating students “for a diverse and changing world.”

This thinking is behind Augustana’s plans for The Austin E. Knowlton Center for Innovation in Health, Wellness and Human Performance, which the college will unveil in 2020. Building on our renowned programs in the sciences and pre-health fields, Augustana also will introduce a major and minor in kinesiology—the study of human movement and physical activity, and their impact on the health and well-being of individuals and societies.

Launched by an $8 million investment from the Austin E. Knowlton Foundation, the center will include classrooms and offices, exercise and mindfulness laboratories, gathering areas, and an aquatic center with 25-yard and therapeutic pools. It will bring together faculty expertise from public health, communication studies, psychology, biology, kinesiology and more. Through its design and blending of programs and spaces, the center will integrate mindful, intellectual and physical activity.

At ELCA colleges and universities, we are aware that to address problems and challenges facing the whole world, education of the whole person is necessary. As Saint Irenaeus of Lyons has said, “The glory of God is the human person fully alive.”

When it is built, the Austin E. Knowlton Center for Innovation in Health, Wellness and Human Performance may be the one building on our campus that most encompasses preparation of “the human person fully alive.” Throughout the Midwest it will be known for excellence in educating responsible, responsive leaders who are mindful of community and global issues related to health and wellness.

I invite you to visit Augustana and see it for yourself.

Steven C. Bahls, President
Dear Friends in Christ,

Proverbs 29:18 from Eugene Peterson’s *The Message* reads, “If people can’t see what God is doing, they stumble all over themselves; but when they attend to what God reveals, they are most blessed.” People like to have a vision of where God is leading and guiding them. Every congregation needs a clear vision of how God is using its gifts in its particular location to care for the community.

The same is true for Carthage College. On Feb. 20, President John Swallow shared his vision for Carthage in the years to come. He gave us four phrases to help guide our work: Communicate boldly. Educate expansively. Integrate regionally. Excel responsively.

**Communicate boldly.**
We want people to know about Carthage and what it has to offer. We also want people to know that Carthage is affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Our connection with the ELCA roots us in the work of helping every student who comes to Carthage to find their vocation. We also want people to know that, if they come to Carthage, we will help them discover more about who they are, the gifts they have, and how they can make a difference in the world.

**Educate expansively.**
As we all know, the world is changing rapidly. Technology is pushing all of us to learn new skills not only for our work, but for basic living in the 21st century. Carthage is creating — and will continue to create — new programs that help both traditional undergraduate students and adult students who need to update their skill set.

**Integrate regionally.**
Carthage wants to be involved in providing the people that this region — and the world — will need to thrive. Working together with businesses, nonprofits, churches, and other local organizations, Carthage students, faculty, and staff can make a difference in the Kenosha/Racine communities and beyond.

**Excel responsively.**
We want to do all these things well, and it will mean training faculty and staff to help our students achieve their goals. We will keep our eyes on the future and be nimble with our responses to what is needed.

This is an exciting time at Carthage, as we look for new ways to tell the world about the hidden gem in southeastern Wisconsin — a college where students are educated to think deeply about the gifts they have to offer the world and are given the skills to take those first steps out into the lives they are called to lead.

In Christ,

Pastor Kara Baylor – Director of the Center for Faith and Spirituality
2018 Ministry Highlights

Ewalu programs are effective at strengthening connections between youth and their home churches. All programs seek to foster lasting faith formation within sound ELCA Lutheran theology. God’s work was done by your hands again this year through your partnership with Ewalu. Thank you for being part of this!

2018 Program Highlights

- Summer Bible Study (ELCA: LOM) “This Changes Everything” (Ephesians 2:8)
- Northeastern Iowa Synod Youth Ministry Network Retreat (April)
- 2 Dirty Feet Retreats, weekend Junior High faith-building events (March, Oct.)
- 2 Volunteer Family Work Weekends for maintenance projects (April, Oct.)
- “Family Camp” cross-generational retreat: record high numbers! (July)
- Ewalu Fall Festival & Quilt Auction, 31st Annual (September)

Christian Education at Ewalu: 2018 Numbers

Summer Bible Camp

| 1,047 Summer Campers (up 6%) including 104 Family Camp participants |
| 20 unique summer programs for participants in grades K-12 and families |
| 820 Day Camp (VBS) children at 24 churches/communities plus 100+ volunteers |
| 49 Youth Ministry Staff, 27 x 4-week high school “Leadership Training” participants |

Retreats and Events

| 125 retreats and events hosted at Ewalu (non-summer) |
| 994 guests at 56 Retreats at the our Main Site facilities |
| 749 guests at 32 Events at the Ewalu “Stone Center” |
| 1,276 guests for 26 School Retreats and Events |
| 167 participants at 11 Volunteer Events |

1,047 summer campers were given general scholarships totaling $247,800
66 children & youth received “Greater Need” Campership gifts totaling $15,507

Recent Ewalu staff currently enrolled at Lutheran Seminaries: 7

Hours of intentional Christian Education provided by Ewalu in 2018: 88,446 *

* conservative estimate
Dear Friends,
Warm greetings on behalf of our faculty, staff, students, and alumni! Here are some highlights of recent additions or enhancements to the campus:

**Grand View Receives Nearly $1 Million to Establish The Moses Project**
Grand View University received a grant of $996,038 to help establish The Moses Project. The mission of the project is to give rural pastors a vision of ministry that will help them thrive in congregational leadership and, in turn, enhance the vitality of the congregations they serve. This program is designed to help them build relationships with and learn from experienced clergy who will guide them in their early ministerial career. More information is available at [www.grandview.edu/the-moses-project](http://www.grandview.edu/the-moses-project).

**Grand View Choir to Tour & Perform Home Concert**
The Grand View University Choir will travel on an eleven-day 2019 Spring Tour through Nebraska, Wyoming, Utah, Idaho, Oregon, Washington, and Montana. Wherever they sing, they have been praised for their excellence in musicality, blend, programming, and attention to detail.

**Grand View Alumnus Named to Iowa Supreme Court**
Grand View alumnus and appeals court judge Christopher McDonald will become the first person of color to ever serve on the Iowa Supreme Court. "I know that as the first minority or person of color appointed to the Supreme Court, people will have special expectations for me in terms of leadership and mentorship and I understand that. I appreciate that," said McDonald. “I embrace those expectations and I’ll certainly do my best to meet and exceed them."

**Grand View to Begin Women’s Wrestling this Fall**
Grand View University is proud to announce the addition of a women's wrestling program beginning in the fall of 2019. Grand View Director of Athletics, Troy Plummer, is excited: “Due to the increased interest and participation in the sport of women's wrestling locally and in the NAIA, along with the success of our men's program, we believe this is the best fit for Grand View as the 26th varsity program.” Angelo Crinzi is the first Head Women’s Wrestling Coach.

**NEXUS Community of Young Adult Leaders**
Grand View received a generous grant from the Lilly Endowment to launch a Youth Theology Institute for the purpose of cultivating youth who will be theological leaders of the church. The Institute immerses high school students in Christian community, learning under Grand View’s theology faculty, being exposed to the vocation of ministry, and putting into practice their calling. More information is available at: [www.nexusgv.org](http://www.nexusgv.org)

**Grand View Wrestling Wins Eighth-Consecutive National Title**
The Grand View wrestling program won an unprecedented eighth-straight team national title. With the win, the title is the second-longest consecutive championship streak for any wrestling program at any level. Grand View finished with a total of 12 all-Americans and two individual national champions.

**Campus Ministry at Grand View**
Campus ministry continues to grow and serve our students in many ways. Chapel is held once a week with different guest speakers often featured; there are also multiple Bible study groups, prayer groups, and evening worship offerings. The Viking House on campus is open during the day for students to hang out, eat, study, or relax.

God’s Peace and Joy,
Kent Henning, President
Dear Friends in Christ,

Thank you for your partnership! Your prayers, gifts, attendance and encouragement make it possible for great things to happen in camper lives at Bible Camp! Thank you!

It is amazing to watch God renewing and refreshing children of all ages though Bible Camp as they step away from their busy lives to intentionally, or sometimes accidentally, come to a place with fewer demands on their life, a place where they can hear afresh the voice of the One who loved them first, the One who loves them the most, and the One who will love them for eternity.

God brings refreshment to campers through every aspect of camp including games, worship, Bible studies, fellowship, prayer, swimming, boating on the lake, campfires, crafts, talent shows, songs, s’mores, skits and the mime. Times with pastors, youth directors, friends and camp counselors all provide voices of encouragement to campers in all kinds of life situations.

Friends of the camp have provided new opportunities for ministry. Campers enjoy praising the Lord while protected from the weather in the new chapel at Ingham Lake Bible Camp. Even louder shouts of praise sometimes come from the new TurboChute waterslide at Ingham Lake and the Thunderdome on West Lake Okoboji. We praise God and learn both inside and outside at Bible Camp.

Our summer 2019 Theme will be, “PRESS ON!” based on Philippians 3:13-14. Pray with us for God to keep blessing youth campers, family campers and adults through these camps in the summer and throughout all the seasons. We are well on our way to having our 70 summer staff, including a growing number from across the globe which is a great witness to the power of God at work around the world.

Your partnership in Lutheran Outdoor Ministries at Ingham Okoboji changes lives! We thank you! We join you in proclaiming the grace, salvation and faithfulness of our loving God! Come and join us whenever you can at one of these two beautiful camps! May God bless you, and may God continue to bless our work together!

For the many who are blessed,

Rodney Quanbeck  Dan Antoine  Kristin Rienhardt  Jim Sunde  Sara Heutink  
Executive Director  Director of Programs  Day Camp Director  Ingham Director  Registrar

Our mission is to know Jesus Christ and to make Christ known to all.

with camps on Ingham Lake and West Lake Okoboji

Main Office: 1203 Inwan St, Milford IA 51351

1.800.OKOBOJI  www.okoboji.org
Matthew 25:40  And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members to my family, you did it to me.’

Anytime one is sick and hospitalized away from their home community, family, friends, pastor and faith community, there is a sense of being “least” – and “lost”; of not being known. Feelings of concern, anxiousness, uncertainty and isolation are common. Learning that you or your loved one has a life-altering disease or condition can shake one’s spirit and faith. It is into such situations that hospital chaplains are called to the bedside of patients, to provide them and their families with support, assurance of God’s presence and love, the means of grace through Communion and Baptism and are an extension of their faith community – truly “God’s Hands” present to them.

At University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, such has been the ministry of Lutheran Outreach Chaplain Cindy Breed for over 22 years. Into each UIHC room Chaplain Cindy enters she bears the light of Christ’s love, the promises of the Gospel, the means of Grace, and a consoling and comforting presence for those often feeling as if they are “one of the least” and vulnerable. She is an extension of the local Lutheran parish, and provides a welcoming presence in the midst of uncertain times. Chaplain Breed through Lutheran Chaplaincy Outreach is your arms of Christ wrapped around sick and vulnerable Lutheran brothers and sisters hospitalized at UIHC.

Over the years Chaplain Cindy has developed close and trusted relationships with pastors and with members of their flocks when being treated at UIHC. She is literally a phone call or email away and can be beside the patient quickly when their pastor is unable to be present. She has afforded pastors the opportunity to tend to the flock at home with their emergencies and needs with some peace, knowing that those hospitalized are receiving excellent spiritual and emotional support until they can visit.

Many of your congregations have supported LCO over the years, for which we all are deeply thankful – especially those who have received Chaplain Cindy’s support and pastoral care. LCO continues to request your financial and prayer support whether you are an individual, a congregation, a WELCA group, or any other Lutheran entity. A yearly financial remembrance of LCO in your parish’s budgeting process provides sustainable stability for LCO’s ministry. Lutheran Chaplaincy Outreach does NOT receive any synodical funding, yet serves the members of all Iowa ELCA synods as well as individuals from other synods. Personal donations may be made online through our website (www.LCOIOWA.org).

Thank you for choosing to provide the palpable and real experience of Christ’s loving and comforting presence to Lutheran patients and families at University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics through support of this ministry. By such you truly are doing “for the least of these” and members of Christ’s own Body in this world.

The Board of Directors, Lutheran Chaplaincy Outreach
For almost 80 years, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service has been a champion for migrants and refugees from around the world. As we look at our immigrant roots, we are reminded daily to renew our passionate commitment to welcoming newcomers, especially those who are most in need. Through partnership with community based legal and social services, LIRS has supported over 500,000 migrants and refugees as they rebuild their lives in America.

2018 brought its own challenges as migrant and refugee admission numbers were decreased, and the administration introduced the “zero-tolerance” policy at the Southwest border that resulted in the family separation crisis. LIRS responded to the family separation crisis by designing and implementing a new service model in Phoenix and Las Cruces that assisted the US government with family reunification. The model included:

- a safe place to sleep for the night
- food (a hot meal)
- clothing and other immediate needs (first aid, etc.)
- basic case management and needs assessment
- coordination of travel to a final destination.

LIRS provides opportunities for individuals, groups, and congregations to engage with refugees and migrants through several initiatives and programs:

- **Circle of Welcome**: Support newcomers with the integration process once they are resettled in the United States and stand with newcomers as advocates, friends and community members.
- **Refugee Sunday**: Every congregation in the ELCA is invited to lift up the gifts that migrants and refugees bring to our communities. A variety of resources for preaching, Bible study, prayers, devotions, advocacy and community gatherings is available [https://www.lirs.org/refugee-sunday/](https://www.lirs.org/refugee-sunday/)
- **Hope for the Holidays**: Congregations, groups, and individuals are encouraged to write/make cards to those held in detention centers during the holiday season.
- **Detention Visitation**: Join a visitation ministry through LIRS or our partners on the ground around the country.

**Congregational Engagement & Outreach:**
In 2018, the Outreach Unit at LIRS engaged with eighteen ELCA Synod Assemblies, eleven LC-MS District Conventions, one LWML District Convention, and the tri-annual LCMS National Hispanic Convention. Through these engagements, the LIRS Outreach unit strengthened our relationship with Lutheran allies while developing new relationships with partners, advocates, and volunteers. The LIRS Outreach Team offered an interactive learning station on the experience of Rohingya refugees being resettled in the U.S. in collaboration with AMMPARO and Lutheran Disaster Relief at the ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston, Texas.

**Migrant and Refugee Leadership Academy**
LIRS has been intentional in supporting migrant and refugee leaders through the Migrant and Refugee Leadership Academy (MRLA). In 2018, LIRS focused on 5 key states for 2018 MRLA instead of a nationwide MRLA. The state-level academies collectively trained 123 new migrant and refugee leaders with active participation from 30 Academy alumni leaders. The academies focused on enhancing migrant and refugee leadership skills, know your rights workshops, civic engagement strategies, and storytelling. MRLA participants advocated for increased refugee resettlement and an end to family separation by several in-district congressional visits. The current Migrant and Refugee Leadership Academy is comprised of 305 migrant and refugee leaders in 39 states across the US, representing 46 countries of origin.

To learn more about LIRS and how to get involved, visit: [https://www.lirs.org/](https://www.lirs.org/)
In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

– Matthew 5:16

Thanks to the generous support of our friends at the Southeastern Iowa Synod, thousands of Iowans were lifted up, supported, and empowered last year. In 2018, the Southeastern Iowa Synod gave $175,000 and 46 churches gave a total of $100,976 in support of LSI’s mission: to respond to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. Thank you for your dedication to caring for the most vulnerable among us.

TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR IMPACT!

Mental and behavioral health services for Iowa kids and adults
24-7 care for individuals with disabilities
Innovative play, art, and pet therapy for children who have suffered trauma
Healthy, happy foster and adoptive homes for children
Education and support for parents at risk of abuse or neglect
English and work readiness classes for Iowa’s refugee community

LUTHERAN SOCIAL MINISTRY IN ACTION

THANK YOU FOR PARTNERING WITH LSI TO EMPOWER INDIVIDUALS, STRENGTHEN FAMILIES, AND BUILD COMMUNITIES.

YOUR IMPACT IN 2018

In 2018, LSI provided:
- 14,743 home visits to young parents
- 12,138 therapy sessions to adults, children, and families
- 153,666 hours of service to people with disabilities

Last year, the Global Greens Farmers from LSI’s Refugee Community Services earned $140,546 from farmers market and Community Supported Agriculture sales.

New in 2018: Strengthening Families!
LSI pioneered the Strengthening Families program in 2018 to support 21 families participating in LSI programs. The program engages parents who are struggling with substance use disorders and their children by providing the education and resources they need to improve communication, positive parenting, and building happy, healthy homes.

ABOUT LSI

Lutheran Services in Iowa
Toll free 866.584.5293
www.LSIowa.org
www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa
www.twitter.com/LSIowa

For more information, contact Deb Whitford, director of philanthropy and church relations, at deborah.whitford@LSIowa.org or 563.676.2065.

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations.
Joint report to synods from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago & Wartburg Theological Seminary

Dear Partners in Ministry in the Southeastern Iowa Synod,

We know that you seek out and value excellent leaders for your ministries. Wartburg Theological Seminary (WTS) and the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC), the two seminaries that you support, are dedicated to forming such leaders. This report reflects the spirit of collaboration between our schools and highlights the benefits of the distinctive ways we form leaders.

Together, LSTC and WTS have been learning from and working with Latinx/Hispanic leaders in Arkansas/Oklahoma and the Texas synods since early 2017 on ways to provide theological education for Spanish speaking communities. In 2018, leaders within the synods completed the first pilot programs that they developed in partnership with the seminaries to continue this work of developing theological education and identifying new rostered leaders.

Distinct ways LSTC and WTS serve church and world
The distinctiveness of our locations and programs mean that those following their call to leadership in the church can find the best fit for their circumstances and passions.

LSTC is a community that forms leaders to form communities. This emphasis is part of LSTC’s innovative public church curriculum. Since we are the ELCA seminary with the highest proportion of residential students, they are able to take advantage of all of the resources and learning opportunities the Chicago area has to offer. Students embrace the joys and challenges of being in a diverse community knowing that it strengthens their capacity to lead in a variety of ministry settings. In 2018 LSTC strengthened its mission by

- Hiring three new faculty members in essential areas: Dr. Eunyung Lim, associate professor of New Testament; Dr. Kimberly Wagner, associate professor of homiletics; and Dr. Marvin Wickware Jr., associate professor of church and society and ethics. Each has a reputation for excellence in teaching and scholarship, and stands at the beginning of a very promising career.
- Hiring Andrea Finnegan as Vice President for Finance and Clyde Andrew Walter as interim Vice President for advancement. They are leading us in new directions and inspiring confidence in these critical areas of operation.
- Creating a new full-time faculty position, Director of Contextual Education to focus attention on the formation of master’s students in collaboration with congregations, local communities, synods, and faith-based organizations.
- Awarding 24 Public Church Fellowships to master’s level students who work an average of seven hours a week in 14 local nonprofit agencies. Fellows receive a monthly stipend and reflect together on faith formation and service.

With deep roots, WTS explores new ways of preparing leaders for a changing world. Investments in digital teaching and learning partnered with a commitment to building strong programs – both traditional and new – have contributed to several years of growth at WTS. Students (both residential and distance) learn from a teaching-centered, relational faculty to be formed as faithful leaders for our church. With the growth of new and expanded learning models, students in Dubuque learn alongside students from all four corners of the United States (and everywhere in between). The broad contexts each student in the WTS community brings has enriched and grown the capacity for
pastoral formation through the exchange of learning, sharing, and action-reflection practiced throughout the curriculum. WTS has much to celebrate with you, our partners in ministry, as we look toward the rest of 2019:

- Two consecutive years of significant enrollment growth.
- Largest Theological Education for Emerging Ministries (TEEM) program in the ELCA, training even more leaders for ordained ministry.
- Doubled the number of students in our Collaborative Learning (serving in a congregation and learning in real-time from a distance for the entirety of the degree program) Program and expansion of the program to include Master of Arts in Diaconal Ministry students.
- First students entered in the Integrated Bachelor of Arts/Master of Divinity Degree Program in partnership with Wartburg College.
- Redesigned Master of Arts and Master of Arts in Diaconal Ministry Degrees to meet the needs of new audiences of students.
- Significantly increased scholarships available to students, combined with a 61% decrease in student borrowing since 2015.

**Alumni stories**
Finally, we’d like to introduce you to just one alumna from each of our seminaries.

**Minna Bothwell**
Minna Bothwell, Wartburg Seminary `14 graduate, has been named one of the Des Moines Register’s “People to Watch in 2019.” Minna is serving in her first call at Capitol Hill Lutheran Church in Des Moines and has solidified a space in her community as an administer of the gospel for those in need, especially LBGTQ+ people, and immigrant and refugee communities. All of this starts at church, where Minna practices relentless hospitality in the name of Jesus Christ to all who enter.

**Fatima Bass Thomas**
Fatima Bass Thomas is a leader in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Gambia (ELCG). She is using what she learned at LSTC to help empower women in the Gambia and Guinea Bissau. “They are using the Scripture to block women. I want to bring back all I learned at LSTC (about) those Bible passages. . .that this is not the whole message of those passages.” Because she speaks the local language, Bass Thomas is now serving churches in Guinea Bissau, teaching baptizing and presiding to hundreds of new Christians.

We invite you and members of your congregation to visit our seminaries and participate in worship, attend educational events, discern a call to ministry or visit with some of the future leaders that you and your synod support through your gifts to Wartburg and LSTC. To learn more about your seminaries and the innovative and distinctive ways we are forming leaders, please visit [www.lstc.edu](http://www.lstc.edu) and [www.wartburgseminary.edu](http://www.wartburgseminary.edu).

Your partnership is essential for LSTC and Wartburg to continue our shared mission of providing effective theological education. Thank you for joining us in developing leaders for the many ministries of your congregation, synod, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Yours in Christ,

James Nieman  
President  
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

Louise N. Johnson  
President  
Wartburg Theological Seminary
Greetings from the campus of Luther College in Decorah, Iowa! I appreciate this opportunity to connect with you, the college’s extended community, with our 2019 Synod Assembly report. Luther College is committed to the life of faith and learning, offering students both engaged academic learning and a vibrant faith community on campus. We count on your partnership in this important work.

At Luther, students, faculty, and staff come together in community to learn actively, live purposefully, and lead courageously for a lifetime of impact. For Luther students, learning happens everywhere—from the college’s classrooms and natural surroundings in Decorah to experiential learning opportunities in cities across the country and study abroad locations around the world. Our curriculum encourages learning across disciplines and cultivates curiosity, community, and commitment to the common good. The college inspires students to expand their knowledge and deepen their values so they will be ready take on the challenges facing our communities, society, and the world.

At Luther, our college pastors are available to all within the Luther community for conversation, reflection, vocational discernment, and counseling. Pastors Mike Blair and Anne Edison-Albright minister to students, faculty, and staff at Luther. Luther’s College Ministries provides rich worship opportunities and prepares students for roles of leadership in the larger church. Mission trips, Bible studies, and other small group opportunities help students deepen their faith while engaging life’s big questions with peers and mentors. At the core of College Ministries is the Luther College Student Congregation. The student congregation elects a council each year who work in partnership with the college pastors to provide a rich range of ministries and opportunities for students to explore their faith, build community and discern their particular gifts and calling for leadership and service.

One tangible way your church can support Luther College is to encourage your high school students to visit campus. Should they choose to enroll, we hope you will consider supporting them with an EPIC grant (Education Partners in Covenant). Luther will match up to $1,000 per year in support of each student from your congregation. More information can be found at luther.edu/financialaid/current/scholarships.

Our community of faith and learning at Luther College provides students an exceptional environment where they will learn and grow, discerning their strengths and gifts, identifying their purpose and goals, and preparing for their careers. Thank you for your prayers and your support, and thank you for encouraging high school students to explore all that Luther College offers them for their college years.

Soli Deo Gloria,

Paula J. Carlson, Ph.D.
President
LCM has had a great year!

Three highlights of this past year have been:

1. A significant presence in the U of I Homecoming parade with 25 students riding, walking on the LCM float.

2. A combined fall campus ministry retreat with Waldorf University and UNI, integrating the social justice issue of immigration reform with a rally, march and interfaith worship. This was done in conjunction with Sanctuary Church, the Poor People’s Campaign and JustChurch. Over 50 students participated in these events.

3. A Christmas project, wherein the LCM students raised $5000 to purchase gifts/gift cards for the families of the men arrested and detained in Mt. Pleasant last summer. Students purchased gifts for over 30 individuals/families. Gifts were delivered to the Mt. Pleasant food pantry on December 17.

In addition to these highlights, students have done a wonderful job of connecting with one another. The LCM house of often full of students studying, resting, cooking and visiting. While they are forming close relationships, they do a fantastic job of welcoming new students to this community. In the past four years, LCM has grown from a community of 5 to a weekly community of about 45. We are currently planning a February retreat to Wartburg Theological Seminary, including all the campus ministries in the state of Iowa. This is exciting!

It is public news that Gloria Dei Lutheran Church sold the LCM house and property to the University. Gloria Dei Lutheran Church made every effort to relocate our house to another downtown property, but we were unable to get the property properly zoned. Gloria Dei donated the house to the Historic Society, along with a goodwill gift of $50,000 towards the relocation of this historic home. Both the University, who owns the property, and the city, who now owns the house, are allowing LCM to occupy the house while the future of the house is determined. In the meantime, Gloria Dei is making plans to use some of the monies secured by the sale to build a wing for LCM. We ask for prayers from the supporting congregations during this transitional time; even though Gloria Dei will host LCM in its building, we still depend upon the support of its generous alumni and supporting congregations. We boldly ask for your continued and increased support, as LCM enthusiastically enters its 100th anniversary in having a presence on the campus of the University of Iowa. LCM remains committed to serving the students, faculty and Iowa City community as a place where the academic and spiritual world creatively engage one another. In a time when church trends seem to be declining, be assured that LCM is thriving. We give God thanks for you, friends in Christ.

Peace be with you,
Pastor Sarah Goettsch
Greetings from Lutheran Campus Ministry at Iowa State University! Every year I write a report that outlines what our ministry has looked like over the past 12 months. When I was preparing the report for this year, I wanted to tell you all about how faithful, creative, loving students we have at University Lutheran Center. One way to relay this is let the students themselves speak about what campus ministry has meant to them. Here is what three different students wrote:

Hi! My name is Tyler. I am a current senior at Iowa State University studying Chemical Engineering. While at ISU I have been actively involved in Lutheran Campus Ministry. My involvement began freshman year when I was looking for a Lutheran church and community to become a part of. After graduating, I will be attending medical school to become a physician. During my time at Iowa State, Lutheran Campus Ministry has meant a lot to me. LCM provided me an amazing place to study that allowed me to excel in my courses. Additionally, it gave me a community to build friendships. The people I met through LCM made college a fun and enjoyable journey, and I look forward to continuing these friendships after I graduate. Lastly, LCM helped strengthen my relationship with Christ. College can be a stressful experience, and through the countless Sunday services, Holden Evening prayers, and other church events, I feel that I have a better sense of my spirituality which enabled me to make the best of the college experience.

My name is Jessie Laughridge and I am a fifth year Architecture student who goes to Lord of Life Lutheran Church and ULC. I have been going here since I was a sophomore, and before then, I tried many churches in the Ames area and always ended up feeling excluded for various beliefs I held about the world. I have loved how the programs done at the ULC through book clubs, sermons, evening prayer, and mission trips reflect the values of the church. The orientation of events and points of discussion being social justice makes for an inclusive community within the ULC, as well as welcoming friends into the center. Additionally, having the opportunity to join in fellowship and raise money for the people of St. Joseph's Family of Haiti was a life-changing experience, and one that exposed me to other cultures of Christianity and instilled the value of mutual exchange between groups. My years at Iowa State would have been much different and not as fulfilling had I not been welcomed with open arms at the ULC. I am so grateful to be able to share ideas and love with a supportive community.

My name is Grace Davidson and I am a Junior studying Animal Science. I am lucky to live in the apartment in the church and be its host. Being a host at the University Lutheran Center is something I’ve come to really love. I am a mother-hen at heart so I don’t mind cleaning up and keeping it at tip top shape. It’s not every college students dream to live in a church but I have enjoyed my stay while at the ULC. There are so many benefits while living here, from having a built in family to having opportunities to better serve the Lord. My favorite thing about living at the ULC is no matter the day there is usually someone around to talk to. It also always a hoot to see people’s faces when I tell them where I live. I wouldn’t change where I lived during my time here at Iowa State University because I have made friends, learned life lessons, and come closer with my religion.

Thank you to all of you, the people of our Iowa Synods, for helping us make a place where people like Tyler, Jessie, and Grace can grow in faith, expand their minds, and engage in service!

Pastor Jen Andreas, Campus Pastor
Report to Synod Assembly 2019

Lutheran Living Senior Campus in Muscatine is a ministry of the Southeastern Iowa Synod. Here we provide a home for residents in various stages of independent and assisted living, rehabilitation, and long-term care. From our founding in 1896 as an orphanage until today as a facility for elder care, Lutheran Living Senior Campus serves as a beacon of hope throughout the community. Perched high on a hill south of the city of Muscatine, we offer not only a great view, a newly-renovated facility, and excellent nursing care, but an intentional spiritual atmosphere as well.

This year, Faith Chapel at Lutheran Living began a year-long effort to live out the words of Christ as expressed in Matthew 25:35-36: “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.” We called it The Matthew 25 Project and over the course of the year, we completed a variety of events to heighten our awareness of Christ living among us through the lives of those in need.

In Advent, we again brought out our plywood pig, Penelope, to raise $600 to purchase 20 piglets through the Good Gifts catalog (hungry). During Lent, we participated in the Southeastern Iowa Synod’s “The Water and the Witness” project, raising $666 to help provide clean drinking water in Africa (thirsty). In the summer we completed welcome kits for people new to our facility with a few little gifts to lighten their hearts as they face this major transition (welcoming the stranger). Fall brought our clothing drive for socks and underwear for the local homeless shelter (naked), and the beginning of a card ministry for those residents who are hospitalized (care of the sick). Finally, as our culminating event, we welcomed Pastor Jerry Collell from the Free Indeed! Congregation at Anamosa State Penitentiary to bring the story of working with those who are incarcerated, sharing with him a financial gift of $716 since we cannot go there to worship in person (visiting the imprisoned). In the end, we felt renewed for ministry and full of purpose, realizing that even from such a limited existence as we have here, we could still touch the world with Jesus’ love.

The goal of the Spiritual Care department at Lutheran Living is to meet residents where they are spiritually, support them in their faith life, enable them to live out God’s love wherever they are, and remind them that they are not forgotten by God. The result is a fuller, richer life of purpose for every resident who wants one. Our Matthew 25 Project certainly accomplished this goal in 2018.

The Rev. Susan Bantz
Director of Spiritual Care
The Mission Investment Fund (MIF) is the lending ministry of the ELCA. MIF makes low-interest loans to ELCA congregations and ELCA-related ministries for building and renovation projects. With MIF loans, congregations and ministries can purchase property, construct new buildings, and expand or renovate existing facilities.

MIF loans expand the capacity for ministry. MIF loans help create expanded worship spaces, updated space for education and youth ministry, new kitchens for community meals and soup kitchens, affordable housing units for the community and much more.

At year-end 2018, MIF had 917 loans outstanding, totaling $556.6 million.

To fund these loans, MIF offers a portfolio of investments for congregations, their members, synods and ELCA-related ministries to purchase. At year-end 2018, MIF investments totaled $499.1 million.

MIF is a financially strong and stable organization, with a record of steady, controlled growth. With total assets of $705.4 million and net assets of $200.8 million at year-end 2018, MIF maintains a capital ratio of 28.5 percent—positioning MIF in the top tier of well-capitalized church extension funds. For more information, visit mif.elca.org.

MIF loans and investments in the Southeastern Iowa Synod (as of December 31, 2018):

- 8 Mission Investment Fund loans, with a balance of $4,566,013
- $5,687,525 in Mission Investment Fund investments

MIF representative:
The Rev. Richard Wehrs, Regional Manager, Tel: (708) 475-2169; email: richard.wehrs@elca.org
To our friends and partners in the Southeastern Iowa Synod where Mosaic provides services out of Chariton, Des Moines, Nevada, and Osceola,

2019 was a year of growth and gratitude for Mosaic. In times of dramatic change, we’re encouraged by God’s continued grace and remain grateful for your synod’s commitment to ministry with and among people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

• We’re pleased to partner with dozens of churches to support church hubs, which provide opportunities for people with and without disabilities to spend their days building relationships and community. These connections are key to the health and wellness of all people. To learn more about our community hubs, visit mosaicinfo.org/church-hubs.

• At the end of 2018, we released a report that detailed just how much social connections and other factors influence people’s health. It may seem ground-breaking, but we’re not surprised. We’ve known for a long time that God’s people belong in community with each other. To read the full report, visit mosaicinfo.org/qualityreport.

• Rejoicing Spirits, which helps congregations support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their loved ones in worship, continues to grow and evolve. More than 50 congregations across the nation participate in this transformative ministry. To learn more about this unique ministry, visit rejoicingspirits.org.

• Mosaic also announced the acquisition of Soreo in November. Soreo provides in-home supports to Arizonans with intellectual disabilities and older adults who want to remain in their homes. This new ministry is a natural way for us to continue to love and serve our neighbors in need. To learn more, visit soreo.com/in-home-support.

We are continually impressed by the generosity of so many faithful donors and volunteers across the nation who support our mission. It is a deep joy of mine to ask new and long-term donors why they continue to give. More often than not, their answer centers around gratitude for all they have been given by God and a commitment to serve God’s people. This gratitude and commitment strengthens and sustains our employees, contractors and the people we support.

Thank you,

Linda Timmons, President and CEO, Mosaic
Benefits in Action
Walking Our Promise to Support Those Who Serve

Yes, things have changed in the church, especially in the last decade. But like Martin Luther’s description of faith — “a living, busy, active, mighty thing” — Portico Benefit Services is constantly evolving, finding more efficient ways to help clergy and employees steward their gifts for the sake of the world.

As the ELCA’s benefit ministry, we’re called to live out a 200+ year legacy of service to clergy and employees. Our talented staff leverage Portico’s long-term experience, industry partnerships, and innovation-embracing culture to deliver benefits that can help people live well throughout their service and into retirement.

Blessings on your ministry. It’s a privilege to serve you.

By the Numbers — Helping People Live With More Confidence

| 640 | Members Retired in 2018, and we celebrated with every one! |
| 8,943 | Pounds Lost so far by ELCA-Primary members enrolled in our new Omada health improvement program. |
| 621 | Employees Joined when four new Lutheran social ministry organizations decided to offer Portico benefits to their staff last year. |
| 23 | Companies Screened from ELCA social purpose funds for holding reserves of oil shale and tar sands. |
| $1M | Debt Paid Off by plan members working with LSS Financial Counseling, as of year-end 2018. |
| 4.5% | Baseline Rate Increase for employer health contributions in 2019 — on average, the lowest increase in 5 years. |
| $94 | Less Per Month paid in premiums by most ELCA Medicare-Primary retired members in 2019 thanks to our switch to Humana. |
| 2,500 | Worries Released by ELCA Youth Gathering attendees at Portico’s unbinding prayer station. |
| 6,080 | Learning Hours invested by members in Portico’s financial education seminars, webinars, and videos last year. |
Thank you for taking the time to learn about the ministry of Region 5 as you prepare for and engage in the business of your synod assembly. This synod joins with eleven other synods in Wisconsin, Upper Michigan, Iowa, and Illinois to form Region 5; one of the 9 regions across the ELCA. The ministry of region 5 is roughly divided into 3 categories: convening synod ministry leaders; accompaniment of those preparing to become pastors and deacons; and tending to archival records.

As a region, your synod bishop, staff, and other leaders gather with their colleagues from time to time throughout the year. These gatherings are a way for them to support and pray with one another; and to share their ideas, experience and expertise with one another in order to faithfully minister in your synod.

As candidacy and leadership manager for region 5, much of my work is spent working with synod candidacy committees. “Candidacy” is the term used to describe our process of forming and preparing people to serve as a pastor or deacon in the ELCA. Like the many faithful volunteers that serve on your synod candidacy committee, I am honored to meet our seminary students and explore with them how God is calling them to service in the world.

You have a part in raising up, nurturing, and sending those whom God calls into service as pastor and deacon. To that end, I commend to you a new resource, “Called to Lead”, available online at www.elca.org/resources/candidacy. This discernment guide is for those who are wondering about ministry as a pastor or deacon. As a leader in your congregation, it is also a resource for you as a helpful conversation tool when talking with people you know who have gifts for ministry in the ELCA. Building upon our calling as baptized people of God, readers of this guide will have the opportunity to explore gifts and abilities, as well as readiness to begin an intentional time of formation for ministry leadership.

As a region, we also share in the care of archival records. Region 5 archives are housed at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. Our archivist, Sue Dodd, collects records of and responds to inquiries concerning: synods, deceased rostered personnel, and dissolved congregations within region 5. This work both preserves institutional records and documents the historical record of the institution within the context of the larger world. Approximately 200 requests come in each year from individuals for information found in the region 5 archives. As congregations in the region make decisions to close, Sue is a resource to you in determining what records to save and how to transfer them to the archives.

Thank you for your synod’s participation in this shared ministry and for the privilege to serve among you.

Rev. Ramie L. Bakken, Candidacy and Leadership Manager  ramie.bakken@elca.org
Sue Dodd, Region 5 Archivist sdodd@wartburgseminary.edu
Greetings to you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! It was a very full year of Christ centered ministry at Riverside where we saw God at work in the lives of His kids all over the place. First two things to know about Riverside is:

1. Our mission, "To know Jesus Christ and to make Christ known to all" continues to be our sole aim; to be laser focused on Jesus Christ.
2. Riverside is the Lord’s camp. It’s His. We desire to seek His will and His way in all aspects of our ministry.

*75th Anniversary Celebration. We had an incredible 75th anniversary celebration in April where we celebrated all that God has done since Riverside was founded in 1943. Praise God for 75 years and we’re excited to see what He will do in the next 75!

*Summer Camp. God is so good and we saw Him at work in powerful ways through campers, families, and our staff this summer! Our summer camp numbers continued to grow this summer as we had the great opportunity to love and share the Good News of Jesus Christ with 1961 campers on-site and another 760 campers off-site through day camps! We were blessed with an outstanding summer staff with young people from all over the world serving the Lord together and experiencing a Spirit-filled and Christ-centered community.

*Adult Programs. Our adult programs continue to grow and be great opportunities for us to provide Christ-centered, restful, and fun retreats for people across the country. This past year we brought back a Men’s Retreat with the help of a great planning team. Look in the future for even more opportunities for adults to enjoy a retreat here at Riverside!

*Transition. 2018 was a year full of year around staff transitions. Jan and Dave McDermott, our incredible and faithful Directors of 21+ years announced their retirement in November of 2017. We’re so thankful for the shining example of Christ centered leadership they provided to our staff for so many years. Our year around staff is a solid staff and have handled this transition with great grace and devotion to the Lord’s continued work here. Jan and Davé’s last day at Riverside was October 8, 2018 and was preceded by a full house retirement celebration in the Dining Hall. Thank you for your continued prayers and support of Riverside and we’re thankful to partner with you in ministry as we fix our eyes on Jesus Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith. God’s blessings to you!
Women of the ELCA Report 2018-2019

Last June 22-23, 2018, the Women of the ELCA held the 31st Synodical Gathering at the Windsor Heights Lutheran Church in Windsor Heights. The theme was "all anew" with the verse "Therefore if any man will be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are past away; behold all things are to become new." 2 Corinthians 5:17 We had about 75 women attending from the SE Iowa Synod. The speakers were on a variety of subjects including mental health, immigration, abusive and trafficking victims, and what to do if there is an active shooter.

Then Oct. 27 was the Fall retreat held in Davenport with the theme "Voices of the Villages: Multicultural Fair" with the verse "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male or female for you are all one in Christ Jesus." Galatians 3:28. We learned about cultures and Christian practices in different areas in the world.

The Winter retreat was on Feb. 9 at Knoxville. The theme was "Bad Girls of the Bible. It was a fun and interesting day.

Coming up is the Women’s Synodical Gathering June 21-22 at the First Lutheran Church in Keokuk. The theme is "Love our neighbors" and the Bible verse is "And the second is like; love your neighbor as yourself". Registration is in the "Directions" which each church should receive. All are welcome.

Save the date of Oct. 4-5. We will be having a Tri-synod Gathering, this includes all of Iowa. Bethesda Church in Ames has graciously accepted to be the host. The theme is "Love and Compassion" with the verse "Finally be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brothers, be sympathetic, courteous, and humble." 1 Peter 3:8 Information for this event is also in the "Direction" that comes out May 10.

Respectively submitted by

Ardy Proehl
President of the Women of the ELCA SE IA Synod
Enrollment
Fall 2018 enrollment was 1,498 students from 34 U.S. states and 53 countries. This number included 115 international students and 199 U.S. students of color. The top five majors are business administration, biology, elementary education, music education, and journalism and communication.

Focus on the Future
In 2017, Wartburg engaged more than 150 alumni, faculty, staff, students, and friends of the College in an examination of strategic opportunities in today’s challenging environment for higher education. Task forces focused on academic innovation, student success, and expanding our reach. Wartburg continues to study and implement ideas that grew out of the initiative:

- In spring 2018, the Wartburg Board of Regents approved a new academic major in exercise science. Work is underway to raise funds to create new laboratory space, which also will strengthen other academic offerings in the Department of Health and Human Performance.
- Engineering Science faculty are working to refine the major and develop specializations in the new Bachelor of Science track. The department also dedicated an Innovation Studio, funded in part with a $123,000 grant from the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust, to expand hands-on design and creation opportunities for students.
- In partnership with Wartburg Theological Seminary, we are building and populating a new B.A.-M.Div. cooperative program, which streamlines preparation for pastoral ministry. Halcyon Bjornstad, director of integrated B.A.-M.Div. degrees, spends time on each campus generating interest among students. The College also continues to implement the new Master of Arts in Music Therapy.
- A new Center for Integrative and Interdisciplinary Studies seeks to advance several projects that bind our curricula together in the service of our common mission. Dr. David McCullough, the Burk Will Chair in Interdisciplinary and Environmental Studies, was named its director. He is charged with overseeing the interdisciplinary tier of general education, searching for a new study away administrator, identifying physical space for the center, reinventing the endowed chair that was created to infuse ethics across the curriculum, and exploring possibilities for a center for faculty development.
- The College continues to examine its capacity and effectiveness in the areas of online, distance, and digital education and is grateful to the faculty and staff at Wartburg Theological Seminary who have shared successes achieved in the online teaching and learning environment. Wartburg is seeking approval from the Higher Learning Commission to offer its first complete online programs – an English as a Second Language (ESL) endorsement for educators and a post-baccalaureate certificate program in leadership.
- Wartburg continues to improve diversity and inclusion on campus, especially by discerning how best to support our multicultural students’ academic progress through graduation. The American Multicultural Student Success Working Group, in concert with Multicultural Student Services, is assessing students’ progress in their second year. The president’s Diversity and Inclusion Council is implementing initiatives to address findings of a campus climate survey that evaluated students’ perceptions of living and learning at Wartburg. A new Community Response Team is prepared to handle incidents of bias that threaten our campus culture.
- Wartburg became a founding investor in Mill Race, a community workspace in nearby Cedar Falls that supports area entrepreneurs. Building on that relationship, we have developed the Wartburg Incubator, a social entrepreneurship program that supports student efforts to address societal problems. In its first year, the incubator’s Wicked Problems Challenge generated 75 poster ideas from students.
- Because St. John’s Cathedral no longer works with the College, Wartburg has entered into a partnership with Johnson & Wales University in Denver, Colo., to house students in our Wartburg West program. We welcomed Dr. Greg Lorenz, who assumed program director responsibilities following the retirement of the Rev. Bonita Bock after 27 years of service.
Spiritual Life and Campus Ministry

- The Rev. Dr. Brian Beckstrom was inducted as the Herbert and Cora Moehlmann Chaplaincy Chair, following the retirement of the Rev. Dr. Ramona Bouzard. As dean of spiritual life, he leads the College’s ministry program and promotes faith exploration and development in and out of the classroom.
- The Rev. Munib Younan, bishop emeritus of the ELCA in Jordan and the Holy Land, presented “Loving God and Neighbor: Living Out the Biblical Call in the Holy Land” to faculty, staff, students, and the general public.
- The Spiritual Life and Campus Ministry Guiding Team, comprising faculty, staff, and students, continues to implement findings of the SLCM program review, made possible through the generous support of the Siebert Foundation and other donors. Efforts include more clearly articulating our identity as a college of the church, more closely integrating it with practices and decision making, and seeking creative ways to expand the ministry beyond the walls of the Chapel.
- The first annual “God’s Work, Our Hands” Sunday was held with Redeemer and St. Paul’s Lutheran churches in Waverly, featuring joint service projects, worship in the Wartburg Chapel, and lunch. More than 300 people participated, including 50 students.
- The College is planning several events to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Wartburg Chapel in 2019. A fundraising effort will focus on Chapel sound improvement, organ maintenance, and projection capabilities.

Recognition

- Dr. Caryn Riswold joined the Wartburg faculty as a professor of religion, serving as the Mike and Marge McCoy Family Distinguished Chair in Lutheran Heritage and Mission. In addition to her years of teaching experience, Riswold is an accomplished scholar in Lutheran and feminist theologies and the author of three books. Established in 2013, the chair celebrates Wartburg’s distinctive mission and commitment to vocation. Riswold succeeds the Rev. Dr. Kit Kleinhans, who now serves as dean of Trinity Lutheran Seminary.
- Dr. Simon Estes, world-renowned opera singer and former Wartburg distinguished professor and artist-in-residence, received an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters during spring Commencement.
- Dr. Gloria Kirkland-Holmes, associate professor of early childhood education at the University of Northern Iowa, was the 2018 Graven Award recipient. The annual award for Christian vocation continues to highlight the powerful and positive effect of a strong sense of Christian vocation as it interfaces with service to community, the church, and the world.
- Dr. Robert E. Lee, professor emeritus of music, received the Wartburg Medal at December Commencement in recognition of his sustained service to the College.
- Campus Compact named Madison Bloker ’19 of Clarksville, Iowa, a Newman Civic Fellow for her contributions to community and civic engagement. As part of her participation in Wartburg’s Baldwin Leadership Fellows Program, Bloker penned “Bound Blessings,” a devotional that raised funds for the Wartburg Dance Marathon.
- Tom Trenney, minister of music at First Plymouth Church in Lincoln, Neb., and renowned composer and organist, served as visiting conductor and artistic director for Christmas with Wartburg while Dr. Lee Nelson was on sabbatical for one semester.
- The Wartburg Choir joined choirs from Luther College and Iowa State University in “A Celebration of Song” at Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis, marking the first time the three choirs have performed together.
- The Wartburg Castle Singers and Kammerstreicher chamber orchestra performed in the Great Hall of the Wartburg Castle in Eisenach, Germany, during May Term and participated in worship services at the Georgenkirche.
- Sophomores Collins Kalyebi and Saffa Bockarie Jr. each received $10,000 Davis Projects for Peace grants to construct classrooms and provide health education for girls in Uganda and water wells in Sierra Leone, respectively.
- The 2018 wrestling team won a record-setting 14th national championship; the women’s basketball team advanced to the Final Four for the second time in three years; football player Matt Sacia was a semifinalist for the Gagliardi Trophy DIII National Player of the Year; and two student-athletes won NCAA Postgraduate Scholarships, bringing the total to 41.
- President Darrel Colson served on the executive committee of the Network of ELCA Colleges and Universities (NECU) and on the Council of Independent College’s NetVUE Advisory Council.

Wartburg College continues to find focus in a mission that is vibrantly alive and transformative for the entire college community as we learn, work, and serve together. Thank you for your prayers and support as we share in the work of strengthening the Lutheran traditions of higher education and Christian vocation.

Darrel D. Colson, President